

Linnaeus "the zoological *ab urbe condita* of binominal chronology"? and that before 1890.

(iv.) If Desmarest had not said that Leach's *Potamobius* was a river-crab one might have ascribed *Potamobius apud* Samouelle to Leach; but as it is, Samouelle must take the responsibility for his ill-advised method of using Leach's MSS.

(v.) Mr. Stebbing has no right to lead us to suppose that *Potamobius* was not preoccupied; he shows himself to be incapable of recognizing the name when it is absolutely forced under his eyes, for he says of Desmarest that he "would probably have accepted Leach's *Potamobius* had he ever heard of it," and that after I had quoted a sentence of Desmarest passing an opinion on the value of that very name. So entranced has Mr. Stebbing been by the details of my autobiography, that he has missed the kernel of my argument.

(vi.) How one text-book can copy another either peacefully or otherwise I know not; but, if Mr. Stebbing means to gibe at Huxley, Milne-Edwards, Carus, Claus, Gegenbaur, Hertwig, and Boas, he has been guilty of an offence of which I hope he has already repented.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

F. JEFFREY BELL.

*A Gigantic Cephalopod on the Florida Coast.*

By A. E. VERRILL.

Mr. R. P. Whitfield has forwarded to the writer the following letter from Dr. Webb to Mr. J. A. Allen, dated St. Augustine, Fla., Dec. 8th, 1896:—

"You may be interested to know of the body of an immense *Cetopus* thrown ashore some miles south of this city. Nothing but the stumps of the tentacles remain, as it had evidently been dead for some time before being washed ashore. As it is, however, the body measures 18 feet in length by 10 feet in breadth. Its immense size and condition will prevent all attempts at preservation. I thought its size might interest you, as I do not know of the record of one so large."

The proportions given above indicate that this may have been a squid-like form, and not an *Octopus*. The "breadth" is evidently that of the softened and collapsed body, and would represent an actual maximum diameter in life of at least 7 feet, and a probable weight of 4 to 5 tons for the body and head. These dimensions are decidedly larger than those of any of the well-authenticated Newfoundland specimens. It is, perhaps, a species of *Architeuthis*. Professor Steenstrup recorded many years ago a species of this genus (*A. dux*)\*, taken in 1855 in the West-Indian seas; but his example was much smaller than the one here recorded.—*Amer. Journ. Sci.*, January 1897, p. 79.

\* See Trans. Connecticut Acad. vol. v.; also Report U.S. Fish Com. for 1879, p. 51, pl. xii. fig. 4.